

via fax: 011 504 2239 3298 Sr. Juan Orlando Hernández President of the Republic of Honduras	via fax: 011 504 2221 5667 Sr. Oscar Chinchilla Banegas Attorney General of Honduras
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November 11, 2014

Dear Sirs:

We are outraged at the disappearance and death of 15-year old **Maycol Ariel Rodríguez**, a Lenca community member of the organized resistance to the Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam project in Río Blanco, Intibucá Department.

Maycol left his home in La Tejera, Río Blanco, at 6:00am on October 26 by invitation of Evelio González to go hunting at La Vega del Culatón. When he never returned, family and friends searched for him for three days. They discovered his body on October 29, drowned in the Gualcarque River.

It is believed that Evelio González is linked to Desarrollo Energético Sociedad Anónima (DESA), the Honduran company that is partnered with SINOHYRDO of China to construct the hydroelectric dam. Evelio González has a history of aggression and threats against members of hydroelectric dam resistance

Indigenous communities across Honduras are defending their rivers, lands and way of life against construction of hydroelectric projects. For the past two years members of the local Lenca community in Río Blanco have maintained a peaceful protest to block the construction of the Agua Zarca Hydroelectric Dam. Security guards for the companies and Honduran police and military have incited violence on more than one occasion. They have broken into homes and arbitrarily detained and tortured indigenous leaders. Some of the protesters have been killed, including community activist William Jacobo Rodríguez, the older brother of Maycol Ariel Rodríguez (cf our letter of June 21, 2014). In July 2013, resistance members Tomás García and his 17-year old son Allan García were shot when members of the Honduran Army opened fire on Lenca community members during a peaceful protest; Tomás García was killed (cf our letter of July 26, 2013).

We **strongly urge** that you

- carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the disappearance and death of Maycol Ariel Rodríguez, publish the results, and bring those responsible to justice;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the safety of the Lenca residents of Río Blanco, in accordance with their wishes;
- guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Stefan Szittai
Co-Coordinator

copies: Jorge Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, Honduran Ambassador to the US ~ via fax 202 966 9751
James Nealon, US Ambassador to Honduras ~ via fax 011 504 2236 9037
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Tracy Robinson, Rapporteur for Honduras, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via fax: 202 458.3992
Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ~ via email: cidhdenuncias@oas.org
US Senators Brown & Portman and US Representatives Fudge, Gibbs, Johnson, Jordan, Joyce, Kaptur, Latta, Renacci, Ryan ~ via email

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The following people hereby urge you to take action on this matter as indicated in this letter: